

Thank you Mr. Chairman. It is an honor to represent the United States at this BSEC Ministerial in this beautiful, historic city.

The United States supports enhanced cooperation in the Black Sea region, which we view as essential for advancing prosperity and security in the area. The U.S. believes BSEC provides a well-suited forum for such cooperation to take place.

The U.S. has been and wants to remain engaged with BSEC. It is our hope that you will work together to help realize the potential that BSEC offers.

In that vein, I would like to commend the Hellenic Republic for its efforts to initiate joint “green” development projects with its BSEC partners.

The U.S. is pleased to help BSEC realize its full potential by signing today a Science and Technology Memorandum of Intent. The United States hopes that future S&T collaboration will be robust in a variety of areas, including clean, renewable energy, nanotechnology, health and biological systems, environment, advanced networking and information technology, and regional security.

Although the United States is only an observer, we remain committed to collaboration with BSEC through our ongoing participation in working groups and conferences at the working level. We have valued our engagement each year, and we intend for it to be sustained.

Mr. Chairman, we look forward to continued and expanded dynamic collaboration and partnership on a range of areas of mutual interest between the United States and BSEC.

Thank you very much.